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ABSTRACT

In a previous issue, recent thinking and activity on evaluation of administrators were explored. Realization of the need to improve the preparation of higher education administrators goes back several decades. Even today many individuals come to those positions with limited training and perhaps no administrative experience. While first-hand experience may be the best way to learn administration in the long run, trial-and-error learning alone can be expensive and inefficient both for the employee and for the institution. Professional development programs have evolved noticeably in the last decade, and a number of regional and national higher education associations and institutions have sponsored major efforts. However, these programs do not meet all the needs of postsecondary education. Often neglected in administrator training are the department chairmen, who remain the essential link between faculty and administration in most institutions. What might be very useful is some major national service that would help clarify, coordinate, consolidate, improve, and expand on (but not control) the present varied professional development alternatives. (Author/MSE)

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THE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS, PART TWO: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADMINISTRATORS

Charles F. Fisher

Introduction

In the March issue of *Research Currents* we explored some of the recent thinking and activity regarding the evaluation of administrators in higher education (Fisher, March 1977). This issue will look at the other side of the coin—the professional development of college and university administrators. It bears reiterating that evaluation and development are continuous, interacting processes, and have as their common goal the enhancing of the personal and professional growth and development of the individual and his or her administrative performance as it contributes to the overall effective operation of the educational enterprise.

Realization of the need to improve the preparation and training of higher education administrators goes back several decades (see Bauer (1954), Bolman (1964), Henderson (1970), Knapp (1969), Maurer (1976), and Schultz (1968)). Even today college and university administrators, and particularly those who are selected primarily on the basis of "scholarly" qualifications, often come to their posts with limited training and perhaps no administrative experience. Their awareness of the need for orientation in their new positions is sometimes very acute, as evidenced in many of the applications to the Institute for College and University Administrators, sponsored by the American Council on Education. Some of the anxieties and problems encountered by new presidents, as reported by Kauffman (1977), bear further witness to this. And the newcomers are not alone. Even experienced administrators are keenly aware of the need for professional "renewal."

Gross (1977) identifies several factors that "compel administrators to consider new approaches to professional growth":

- A new sense of management accountability or stewardship.
- The declining mobility of administrators due to higher education's economic depression.
- The growth and impact of faculty development programs.
- The inherent relationship between administrator evaluation and development.

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• The necessity of administrator renewal for continuing institutional vitality.

• The contribution of professional development programs to the body of knowledge about administrative theory and practice.

• The relief and renewal it can bring to meeting day-to-day administrative pressures.

Richardson (1975), Lindquist (1977), and others stress the essential relationship between the growth and development of individuals and that of the organization itself.

Professional Development of Administrators

Whether determined through self-assessment, an informal evaluation process, or a structured appraisal system, there probably are areas of professional and personal development and job improvement needed for virtually every college and university administrator. (There are many testimonies to this, and recent research conducted by the University Council for Educational Administration offers supporting evidence (see Edwards and Pruyn (1976)). This might be due primarily to a need to keep abreast of new and complex higher education issues that have implications for administrative role responsibilities and opportunities (legislation, regulation enforcement, collective bargaining, student needs, and EEO); it might be the need for updating oneself in particular areas of administrative concern (personnel policies, trustee relations, curriculum development, planning and budgeting, fundraising, student services, and legal issues); it might also be a need, particularly in the case of novice administrators, for specific role guidelines (duties, authority, and responsibility) and the development of individual skills, styles, and operating strategies relating to organizational behavior, interpersonal relations, communications, leadership methods, decision-making, effecting change, time management, and delegation; finally, it might well transcend the cognitive aspects of learning and reflect the often-neglected affective domain and the need for personal growth and renewal.

While first-hand experience may be the best way to learn administration in the long run, trial-and-error learning alone can be very expensive and inefficient both for the administrator and the institution. Learning the science and art of administration is itself a continuous process that can most effectively be accomplished by complementing on-the-job experience with professional development activities creatively fashioned or selected to meet the specific needs of the individual (Fisher (1973), pp. 15-45; Gaff *et al.* (1977), Knapp (1969), Ryan (1976)). Such activities may range from informal professional reading and institution-sponsored seminars or internships to release time for study and travel, including visits to other campuses or participation in more formal, national programs. The administrator-learner may be anyone from the department chairperson to the president, and he or she may be new to administration or be long experienced.

External Opportunities for Administrator Development

Existing opportunities for administrator development today are fairly prevalent. One need only glance at the periodic calendar of

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coming events section of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* to realize the extent of national and regional offerings, both in number of programs (typically about 60 per month) and in the array of topics covered. (The *Chronicle* also now has begun to publish the "Calendar" annually.) A comprehensive annotated listing of "seminars, workshops, conferences and internships" available each year is contained in *A Guide to Professional Development Opportunities for College and University Administrators*, published annually by the American Council on Education (Galloway and Fisher). The 1977 edition describes 291 programs, sponsored by 90 different organizations and associations.

It is evident from the *Chronicle* (1977), the *Guide* (1977), and individual program announcements that most national and regional offerings range from a few days to a week in duration, and that the shorter programs tend to be thematic in nature, focusing on a current issue or major administrative problem. Some programs are more constituency oriented, concentrating on the role of a particular administrator as it relates both to basic concerns and administrative problem-solving. An increasing number of programs emphasize the team approach in institutional decision-making, and encourage the attendance of several administrators from each participating institution. Enrollment in the majority of these conferences is open to most administrators, though perhaps with preference given to the sponsoring organization's own membership. Some of the offerings require candidate application and limit participation to a certain number, with a few of the programs open only to particular administrator categories.

There are, of course, tradeoffs with regard to the advantages and benefits of various workshops, seminars, institutes and other professional development opportunities. Due to increasingly limited budgets, not to mention precious administrator time, activities must be selected that would appear to address the individual's most significant needs meaningfully and within one's own cost and time constraints. Major considerations would include program breadth versus depth, curriculum design, resource personnel, scheduling, group size and composition, learning environment, geographic location, and sponsor(s).

Professional development programs for administrators have evolved noticeably during the past decade. This perhaps has been due in part to the realization that there is a continuously expanding body of knowledge and, as Zoffer (1976, p. 7) suggests, an emerging "definable set of responsibilities requiring a definable set of administrative skills" for the leadership of our institutions of higher learning. Short-term programs, in particular, have been established in the belief that it just may be possible to telescope relevant learning experiences; enhance conceptual skills and decision-making techniques; impart sound administrative principles, policies, and procedures; relate administrative theory to successful practice; and, in the final analysis, accelerate job effectiveness (Fisher, 1973).

Some Major Professional Development Programs

The earliest of the major national inservice professional development programs founded on these tenets was the Institute for College and University Administrators (ICUA). Established at Harvard University 1955, the Institute became affiliated with the American Council on Education in 1965 and expanded its program offerings. By 1976, some 5,000 administrators from 1,200 colleges and universities had participated in its various week-long institutes, most of which have been intensive orientation programs for recently-appointed presidents, vice presidents, deans, business officers, or student personnel administrators. Drawing upon program leadership nationwide, the Institute uses a variety of teaching/learning

methods, including addresses, panels, seminars, case-study sessions, simulations, and small-group discussions. Participation in each program is limited and is by application only. Several of the institutes are cosponsored by other education associations.

In recent years a number of national and regional higher education associations have established or expanded professional development programs for their own constituencies. To coordinate and improve their respective activities, representatives from two dozen of these associations are now meeting regularly to discuss common concerns, leadership development needs, and opportunities for cooperative programs and services.

A major institutionally-sponsored program of national prominence that provides a more extensive learning experience is the Institute for Educational Management (IEM) at Harvard University. This six-week summer offering, initiated in 1970, draws mostly on Harvard resources and primarily uses the case-study method, supplemented by other techniques, to provide a comprehensive coverage of institutional management approaches for about 120 administrators each year (Harvard University, IEM, 1977). Two more recent summer offerings are the University of Wisconsin's six week Institute for Administrative Advancement and the three-week Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration, co-sponsored by Bryn Mawr College and Higher Education Resource Services (HERS). Both programs, like IEM's, are designed around minicourses and administrative problem-solving tasks.

Available for those who have administrative potential but are not yet in major leadership positions are a number of nationally, regionally, and statewide, consortium, and even institutionally-sponsored internship programs. An internship experience, while time-consuming and very possibly expensive, has the unique advantage of bringing the individual, under the guidance of a mentor, into direct contact with reality where he or she is free to study, observe, and learn unencumbered by the responsibilities and constraints of a specific job commitment (Dobbins and Siauffer (1972), Fisher (1973)). Such an opportunity represents what may be the ideal balance between experience and study—the juncture where, according to many educational philosophers, the most effective learning takes place. Perhaps the best known national program of this nature is the American Council on Education's Fellows Program in Academic Administration (founded in 1965 as the Academic Administration Internship Program), which provides a year-long on-campus learning experience for 40 promising candidates each year.

Administrators who have participated in national and regional professional development programs often report that they have returned to their posts excited about using the ideas they have acquired. For some, however, it is here that an unfortunate paradox occurs, for if they alone have been the benefactors of a professional renewal experience, their enthusiasm can readily turn to frustration if their institution does not offer that climate of receptivity to change and improvement normally engendered by an ongoing program of inhouse staff development.

Inhouse Staff Development Activities

While numerous national and regional professional development opportunities exist, they obviously do not meet all of the needs of American postsecondary education. Some programs may be too expensive, too time demanding, too geographically remote, or not pertinent enough to the immediate staff training needs of a particular institution at this point in its historical evolution. More to the point, there are some personnel development objectives that can

be achieved only within the local setting. More and more colleges and universities have begun assessing their own staff needs and implementing their own inhouse professional development programs.

During the past two years the American Council on Education's Office of Leadership Development in Higher Education surveyed the approximately 1,300 ACE member institutions to get an estimate of the nature and extent of such activities. The findings, included in a supplement (Section X) to both the 1976 and 1977 editions of *A Guide to Professional Development Opportunities for College and University Administrators*, revealed that by 1976 at least 262 colleges and universities had some form of inservice professional development program for their administrative staff members that also frequently involved faculty. Most of these were institutionally initiated and focused, though several were sponsored by consortia or statewide systems. Activities ranged from workshops and seminars to retreats to internships, some relatively brief, others quite extensive and periodic. Topics ranged from role orientation to current institutional concerns, management by objectives, time and resource management, and general higher education issues.

Certainly this is an auspicious beginning, and it might be appropriate to assume that perhaps several hundred additional campuses are providing similar types of developmental activities for their administrative staffs. Nonetheless, it would appear that there are still many institutions that have yet to even identify their staff needs, not to mention explore the opportunities for their professional and personal development. The process should begin at or near home, and the resulting efforts need not be expensive. By using primarily local resources and a little ingenuity, some significant learning and professional growth activities could be implemented, including occasional informal staff seminars and inter-office "mini" internships. Reality-based materials, bibliographies, and various teaching and learning approaches for both content areas and generic processes could be adapted from existing programs. Peer learning, as always, would be an essential ingredient. The focus would not dwell on just the present, but also on *emerging* concerns and opportunities. And, as with any program, there would be provisions for evaluation and subsequent improvement of the developmental process.

Often neglected in our deliberations about administrator development is the department chairperson, who, despite his or her frequent "identity crisis" these days, remains the significant and essential link between the faculty and administration at most institutions of higher learning. (There are increasing references to this, including Booth (1977), Roach (1976), and Shtogren (1977).) A number of workshops for department chairpersons have been offered during the past decade by both national and regional education associations, including some disciplinary societies, but the enormity of the need is overwhelming. Appropriately, a few consortia and some state systems, such as California, Florida, and New York, have begun their own departmental leadership development programs. And at least one major university is planning to offer a one- to two-week national "Institute for Department Chairpersons" in the summer of 1978. However, in the final analysis the major responsibility in this area must rest with individual institutions—not only because of the crucial role (Roach estimates that 80 percent of all administrative decisions take place at the departmental level), but also, as Booth indicates, a program of professional growth for chairpersons is helping to develop future administrative leadership for our colleges and universities.

Our Current State and Future Prospects

Many significant national, regional, and even institutional leadership development opportunities are available today. But generally there is much more that could and should be done. The responsiveness and accompanying budget provision of institutions is the *sine qua non* of the administrative effectiveness and leadership for every college and university of our era. The major hurdles of cost, time, and effort must be overcome before we painfully discover that "administrators in great numbers are too busy to save themselves (and their institutions) from the future" (Zoffer 1976, p. 10).

One of the problems that becomes evident to the administrator seeking professional growth and the college or university that appreciates the need for staff development is that of intelligently identifying the most appropriate and desirable alternatives (Ryan, 1976). Empirical evaluations of most existing programs are lacking, and the psychic, performance, and career benefits are usually based on informal feedback. It also appears that there is some confusing duplication of effort, while at the same time there are other areas of neglected administrative development options to meet the *specific* needs of those who have just assumed, or are about to assume, positions of major leadership responsibility.

What might be very useful to higher education's professional development efforts is some major national service that would help clarify, coordinate, consolidate, improve, and expand on (but not control) the present varied alternatives. Perhaps we should take our lead from industry and government and establish a National Academy for Leadership Development in Postsecondary Education (Fisher, April 1977). Properly conceived, endorsed, financed, and implemented, the academy could offer a multiservice professional development program and also serve as a major residential conference-learning center. It would be separately incorporated with its own trustees representative of higher education's leadership.

The academy would offer its own programs and assist those cosponsored by outside organizations for their own constituencies. The academy's activities might build on Parkinson's concept of the "academic staff college" (1970, pp. 2-4) and Mauer's "academy for higher education administrators" (1976, pp. 244-48), and would include provisions for consultation, training, and relevant, future-oriented research. Its curriculum might consist of a variety of short-term module courses using various teaching and learning approaches, including the case study method. Its faculty, also available to visiting groups, would be comprised of a visiting staff of national educators, scholars, experienced administrators, and other experts, each in residence for various lengths of time. As part of its varied resources, it might also use the services of a domestic version of the International Executive Service Corps (Second Career Volunteers).

The academy's offerings would provide an alternative learning opportunity that would go beyond the capacity of one-shot, short-term seminars, workshops, and institutes, but far short of the requirements in time, cost, and hurdles of graduate degree programs. Indeed, the majority of "students" would probably be those who had completed their graduate studies and are now assuming, or are on the verge of assuming, positions of administrative or governing board responsibility. Other participants would be experienced administrators in search of renewal or recent knowledge in particular areas. In any event, the flexible course and service options would enable the individual to fashion a learning experience extending anywhere from perhaps a week to several months, depending on his or her own specific professional development needs. The prospects for EEO/affirmative action opportunities alone are worthy of deliberation.

While the Academy concept might excite the imagination (initial feedback from administrators and associations has been enthusiastic), the day of a national academy is not just around the corner. In the interim, higher education must not lose sight of its responsibility to ensure the very best leadership and administrative performance possible at its institutions of learning. Present opportunities for professional staff development are fairly extensive at the national and regional levels but they can only complement the programs of individual institutions. The realization and the initiative, as many have suggested, must begin at home.

Conclusions

The evaluation and development of college and university administrators is, or should be, an integral and interrelated, ongoing process to benefit the personal and professional growth of the individual and his or her administrative performance as it contributes to the overall effective operation of the educational institution. No longer do we simply have the task of "maintaining the system" in higher education. Institutions today cannot afford to be "reactive"; they must take the initiative by being "proactive" in developing their own human resources, and in helping to shape their own destinies.

Administrator evaluation has had its advent in higher education during the past few years, but it is still in its infancy. Its appropriateness and potential benefits have yet to be realized or even considered by most colleges and universities. The other side of the coin—staff development—is more advanced, but the concept is still not fully appreciated, nor are all the opportunities explored or developed. In this day and age, the college, university, or statewide system that does not provide adequate budget provisions for staff development, including administrators, is deluding itself. The responsibility is intrinsic to the very concept, purpose, and mission of American higher education...and, in the final analysis, to the viability of its institutions.

The implications of this for postsecondary education are self-evident. While progress at all levels is tentatively encouraging, many of our most vital needs and opportunities for development are not being approached, let alone realized. An institution of higher learning that has a program of administrative staff evaluation and development is demonstrating not only that it has concern for its leadership personnel and their development and job effectiveness, but also that it is taking the initiative in monitoring and improving its own standards of performance.

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